









According to statute law, any person guilty of killing three persons of one family who have not committed any capital offence shall be adjudged worthy of death by hanging (Hing-chih), and in this instance, the case being of aggravated character, orders were at once given to the Provincial Judge and the General Commanding the district to have the sentence carried out and the head of the criminal forwarded to the scene of the murder to be placed on a pole as a warning to evil-doers. The criminal was not a married man and leaves no family; he was a farm labourer living in a hired house, and possessed nothing of value to compensate the relations of his victims. The Governor-General remarks that Hsia Jen-kuei interfered in the dispute between his brother and Chou Sheng-cheng, solely with a view of bringing about an amicable arrangement of the dispute, and that when he was attacked, instead of defending himself, he made his escape. He must therefore, be held free from all blame. The attack, however, which Chou Sheng-cheng and his wife made upon him rendered them liable to punishment, but as they are already dead there is no occasion to consider the matter further, neither is there any need to discuss the case of Tsai Hsing-fa who, it was clearly proved at the trial, was merely an on-looker without any means of rendering assistance. Instructions have been issued to have the bodies interred, and the knife with which the murder was committed has been returned to the Magistrate to be melted down. Case referred to the Board of Punishments by Rescript.

### OPIMUM.

An address to the Chinese Anti-Opium Society, by J. Edkins, D.D., delivered in Peking, at the Annual Meeting of the Society, June 25th, 1888.

In ancient Greek and Latin poetry the poppy is mentioned as having the power of producing sleep, and the earliest Greek authors on medicine were acquainted with the remarkable narcotic properties of this plant. While Confucius was living the power of the poppy was known in the West. In the time of the Caliphs, especially after the founding of Baghdad, A.D. 763, the Arabs began to trade extensively with China, and the poppy was introduced into the country. It was called *shing-chih*, the "millet bag," etc., this last being the name of the seed-vessel. These were added to the jamaica, the molli-hwa, the chi-kia-hwa (henna) and other plants and drugs which the Arabs had brought in their earlier voyages, and introduced at Canton in the third and fourth centuries. It was in the Sung dynasty that the name *ying-hua* came into use, from the resemblance of the seed-vessel to the jar called *ying*. Su-chue, elder brother of Su-tung-pao, wrote a poem on the virtues of the poppy head or capsule, which he says is "the decoction of Buddha's *scheta*," it makes men joyful and invigorates them." No consequent harm was thought of. The day of devotedness to the drug as a passion and a snare, the day of irresistible temptation for myriads of victims, was not then come. Only the truly wonderful virtues of this medicine were then known to some extent. But early in the Ming dynasty, opium began to reach China as a drug already prepared with the name *ya-pien*. A writer Wang-shi, an officer in the Turkish provinces, describes it as growing in the country of the Arabs. From his book it appears that the word *ya-pien* is certainly the Greek word *opion*, transferred through the Persian form *abyon*, or Arabic *afyon*. In the early part of the Ming dynasty it began to be imported, and when the trade was opened to foreign ships in 1567, in Lung Ching's time, it would enter with other drugs at Canton. The tariff was fixed under Wan-li, in the third year, at two taels a hundredweight. It is now eighty. Thus it appears that in the Ming dynasty the lowering of the tariff was very favourable to the increase of the import. The tariff was lowered by one-eighth when there was a general revision of duties in the 43rd year of Wan-li, 1615.

Soon after this time tobacco was introduced from America. It came with Spanish trade from the West Indies to Manila. It soon spread the habit of smoking to Java, Malacca, India, Persia, Arabia. The inhabitants of those countries began to smoke both tobacco and opium, mixing these things with hemp, arsenic, and other narcotics to increase the pleasing effect. Dutch rulers at Batavia witnessed the growth of evil habits most deleterious to public morality. But how difficult to repress these habits! Men will not be controlled. Kaempfer, the traveller, has described these things in lively and impressive colours. The advantage of a society on total abstinence principles is that it imparts a new aid which is added to the efforts of the government. The operations of anti-opium societies aid in reforming the victims of opium, and in placing the habit under a social stigma and ban. The government and legislation have done this in many ways. But it is necessary for native opium societies to afford their help.

The introduction of tobacco-smoking in the Manchu Dynasty led to unexpected results. It was the forerunner of opium-smoking. The Emperors issued edicts against the spread of tobacco-smoking, but in vain. People would smoke. They will smoke still, though it is not a habit of any great advantage to the smoker. Possibly it will have to disappear with opium smoking. The Tsai-li is worth considering whether in a crusade against opium-smoking it would or would not be well to commence a crusade against tobacco-smoking at the same time? In the effort to attain moderation and self-control the two modes of self-denial might well be united. The combination of the two objects might possibly be found to work well.

In 1729, for the first time, penalties were attached by law to keeping opium taverns. The sellers of opium, not the smokers, were to be punished, because the smokers were to be left to their own devices. This is not because the Chinese Government does not consider opium-smoking a crime; later edicts show that the government looks on opium-smoking as worthy even of death. At first, however, only the sellers of opium were punished. They are labelled in the law as "receiving and buying contraband goods" as "secretly opening opium taverns," and as "deserving the same penalty as the leaders of depraved sects and deceivers of the people." Though it was on account of opium-smoking in Formosa that this law was made, yet it was intended for the whole Empire, and not for Formosa only, and this shows that the government had been made fully aware of the evils of opium-smoking in the years preceding 1829, and the danger of its spreading. In 1730, in regard to Formosa, into which island opium-smoking had spread from Batavia, a law was made to regulate the condition of the villages there. Among the evils they were subject to was their being tempted by Chinese to commit various crimes, and opium-smoking was the snare into which they were first entrapped as a preliminary. Some observers of Chinese habits while watching the opium-smoker and attenuate the criminality of the trade, but the Chinese statute-book does not show the least leniency in this respect.

In 1793, the 56th year of Kien Lung, when an English Ambassador came to Peking, a law was published describing the duties of the Ambassador and his suite saw and heard in China. It was noticed that some officials smoked little opium.

At the same time in order to get a perfectly unbiassed opinion as to the condition of the opium, I have requested Dr. Ara Id, advising a physician to the Nagasaki Hospital, and Dr. Tashiro, acting chief surgeon to the Nagasaki Hospital, to make independent inspections and report thereon, which reports are here annexed.

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